



### ***It Makes Sense: Providing Services in the Natural Environment***

Show the video *It Makes Sense: Providing Services in the Natural Environment* for the purpose of setting the stage for this module. Following the video, ask the participant to briefly share an example of an innovative service activity or setting they have observed.

#### **Video**

**It Makes Sense: Providing Services in the Natural Environment** (developed by AHEAD) Hope, Inc.

This videotape shows early interventionists providing services to families of young children with disabilities, birth to three years, in a variety of daily routines, family activities, and settings (i.e., swimming pool, feeding, playground, music and movement class). The resource may be used as a training video to show how early interventionists take advantage of the many learning opportunities to promote family and child skills. A nice feature of the videotape are the experiences shared by families in receiving services in the natural environment.

**Stock #: 258      24 minutes      Closed Caption      Price: \$45.00**

The SKI-HI Institute enjoys a long history of resource and material development. The Institute is nationally and internationally recognized as a leader in producing state-of-the-art materials and resources in early home intervention.

Materials are available through HOPE, Inc., 1856 North 1200 East, North Logan, UT 84341; phone/fax (435) 245-2888; e-mail: [hope@hopepubl.com](mailto:hope@hopepubl.com); Web Site: <http://www.hopepubl.com>

Orders can be made directly over the Internet, safely and conveniently. Credit cards and purchase orders allow for the quickest processing. Orders can also be placed by phone, fax, or mail.



## **Module 5**

### **Feeling at Home on the Journey**

### **Natural Environments**



**Everyday Supports and Services**



## Research and Evidence-Based Practices Related to Natural Environments



There is widespread knowledge and acceptance that the needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities are best met through natural relationships, during natural routines and activities, that occur in natural settings.

Research-based practices in early intervention are evolving. There is a wealth of information that informs how the early intervention community practices family-centered delivery of care in the context of everyday routines.

This knowledge impacts how teams function throughout the IFSP process.

Edelman, L. *Just Being Kids: Facilitator's Guide*. (2001). JFK Partners, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center and Early Childhood Connections, Colorado Department of Education.



**This could be called  
a paradigm shift.**



**Really, a paradigm shift? What  
is a paradigm shift anyway?**

When one conceptual world-view is replaced by another, or, a change of patterns on a massive scale.

Kurzweil, R. *Accelerating Intelligence: Where Will Technology Lead Us?* [Online]. Available:  
<http://nanotechnow.com/nanotechnology-glossary-P-R.htm>  
[Retrieved: 2004, May 19].





It can be challenging for systems to make decisions about embracing specific early intervention models or practices.

Beliefs and values, funding mechanisms, history, personnel resources, etc. are only a few of the issues that influence how early intervention services are delivered.



Edelman, L. (2004). *Enhancing Services in Natural Environments*. Part of a Web-based Conference Call Series Sponsored by the OSEP Part C Settings Community of Practice. Sponsored by National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center and the Southeast Regional Resource Center.



Before continuing,  
please complete the  
following activity as  
noted in *Roadmap for  
the Journey-A Trainer's  
Guide*:

5.3 Research and  
Evidence-Based  
Practice Literature



## Models of Team Interaction in Early Intervention





## Models of Team Interaction In Early Intervention

It is important for service coordinators to be familiar with the primary models of team interaction used in early intervention and how the team model impacts the family's experience.

“The models vary based upon the level of team interaction, parent involvement, assessment process, and intervention method. The type of model used by the team will influence the type of services the child and family receive.”

Rush, D. and Shelden, M. (2001). Coaching in Natural Environments. *Teaming & the Primary Service Provider as Coach Model of Team Interaction*. Orelana Hawks Puckett Institute. [Online]. Available: <http://www.coachinginearlychildhood.org/webmodules/teaming/teammodels.php> [Retrieved: May, 2004].



## Multidisciplinary

In much of the literature, a multidisciplinary team is defined as professionals and individuals working independently of each other and interacting minimally with other team members. Each member of the team, or each discipline, performs a separate assessment and writes an individual report, including discipline specific goals. Treatment is then performed in an isolated setting for remediation of the weaknesses noted during the assessment. McGonigel, Woodruff, &

Roszmamm-Millican, 1994; Rush & Shelden, 1996

Rush, D. and Shelden, M. (2001). Coaching in Natural Environments. *Teaming & the Primary Service Provider as Coach Model of Team Interaction*. Orelana Hawks Puckett Institute. [Online]. Available: <http://www.coachinginearlychildhood.org/webmodules/teaming/teammodels.php> [Retrieved: May, 2004].



When a multidisciplinary team functions in this way, parents often receive separate and fragmented reports, that at times may not be in agreement with each other. This model can often result in overlaps and gaps in services and fails to see the child as a whole.

Rush, D. and Shelden, M. (2001). Coaching in Natural Environments. *Teaming & the Primary Service Provider as Coach Model of Team Interaction*. Orelana Hawks Puckett Institute. Online]. Available: <http://www.coachinginearlychildhood.org/webmodules/teaming/teammodels.php> [Retrieved: May, 2004].





As defined in the federal regulations, the term multidisciplinary means "the involvement of two or more disciplines or professions in the provision of integrated and coordinated services, including evaluation and assessment activities." Federal Register, July 1, 1994, p. 114

This definition of multidisciplinary is more in line with recommended practice in that team members work together throughout the evaluation and assessment process. The transdisciplinary model takes this one step further to include members collaborating and working together during intervention.

Rush, D. and Shelden, M. (2001). Coaching in Natural Environments. *Teaming & the Primary Service Provider as Coach Model of Team Interaction*. Orelana Hawks Puckett Institute. [Online]. Available: <http://www.coachinginearlychildhood.org/webmodules/teaming/teammodels.php> [Retrieved: May, 2004].





## Interdisciplinary

Interdisciplinary teams have more interaction among members than multidisciplinary teams. Each discipline continues to do an individualized assessment and write discipline-specific goals. The team meets to discuss the results of their individual assessments and develop plans for intervention. Direct therapy services typically continue to occur in isolation with discussion among team members occurring primarily at team meetings. McGonigel, Woodruff, & Roszmann-Millican, 1994; Rush & Shelden, 1996

Rush, D. and Shelden, M. (2001). Coaching in Natural Environments. *Teaming & the Primary Service Provider as Coach Model of Team Interaction*. Orelana Hawks Puckett Institute. [Online]. Available: <http://www.coachinginearlychildhood.org/webmodules/teaming/teammodels.php> [Retrieved: May, 2004].



## Transdisciplinary

Transdisciplinary models evolved as team members working with children came to realize that children do not perform isolated skills, irrespective of function or environment. Rainforth, York, & Macdonald, 1992

Members of the transdisciplinary team must implement a high degree of collaboration and work together to meet the needs of a child, family, and other care providers. This means working together in conducting assessments, program planning, developing goals, and implementing the educational plan. Rush & Shelden, 1996

Rush, D. and Shelden, M. (2001). Coaching in Natural Environments. *Teaming & the Primary Service Provider as Coach Model of Team Interaction*. Orelana Hawks Puckett Institute. [Online]. Available: <http://www.coachinginearlychildhood.org/webmodules/teaming/teammodels.php> [Retrieved: May, 2004].



Transdisciplinary team members must also commit themselves to teaching, working, and learning across disciplinary boundaries. McGonigel, Woodruff, & Roszmann-Millican, 1994

This concept is called role release. Role release is a process of one team member transferring information and skills specific to their discipline to another team member who is of a different discipline. Rainforth, York, & Macdonald, 1992

This model decreases the number of professionals that the family must be in contact with on a regular basis while continuing to meet all the needs of the child.

Rush, D. and Shelden, M. (2001). Coaching in Natural Environments. *Teaming & the Primary Service Provider as Coach Model of Team Interaction*. Orelana Hawks Puckett Institute. [Online]. Available: <http://www.coachinginearlychildhood.org/webmodules/teaming/teammodels.php> [Retrieved: May, 2004].



The transdisciplinary model requires professionals to be responsible enough to seek the advice of a specialist in another discipline when a need arises that they are not sure how to address. Although the skills of therapists can cross discipline boundaries, ...professionals should be very aware of individual limitations and keep the best interest of the child, family, and other care providers as the highest priority.

Rush, D. and Shelden, M. (2001). Coaching in Natural Environments. *Teaming & the Primary Service Provider as Coach Model of Team Interaction*. Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute. [Online]. Available: <http://www.coachinginearlychildhood.org/webmodules/teaming/teammodels.php> [Retrieved: May, 2004].





## **The Primary Service Provider (PSP) as Coach Model of Team Interaction**

Rush & Shelden propose that a fourth model of team interaction exists that they call a primary service provider (PSP) as coach model.

The PSP as coach model focuses on coaching of the identified learners as the primary intervention strategy to implement jointly-developed, functional, discipline-free IFSP/IEP outcomes in natural and least restrictive environments with ongoing coaching and support from other team members.

Rush, D. and Shelden, M. (2001). Coaching in Natural Environments. *Teaming & the Primary Service Provider as Coach Model of Team Interaction*. Orelana Hawks Puckett Institute. [Online]. Available: <http://www.coachinginearlychildhood.org/webmodules/teaming/teammodels.php> [Retrieved: May, 2004].



## **Why must we learn about models that differ from the one(s) we use?**

Many colleges and universities across the nation are responding to the changes in early childhood environments by redesigning their personnel preparation programs to **reflect transdisciplinary team-based practices.** Kilgo & Bruder, 1997; Miller & Stayton, 2000; Stayton, Miller, & Dinnebeil, 2002

Kilgo, J., Aldridge, J., Denton, B., Vogtel, L., Vincent, J., Burke, C., and Unanue, R. (2003 Fall). *Focus on Inclusive Education*. Vol.1, #1. [Online]. Available: <http://www.udel.edu/bateman/acei/inclusivefall03.htm> [Retrieved: 2004, May 23].



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As previously noted, it can be challenging for systems to make decisions about embracing specific early intervention models or practices.

Evidence-based innovation takes time. Core training for early intervention service coordinators attempts to inform participants of what we have learned, as our system, like other Part C systems, develops strategies for change.

Service coordinators in Tennessee aspire to provide supports and services in ways that best empower families to meet the needs of their young children. Utilizing evidence-based models of teamwork is critical towards achieving this end.



Before continuing, please  
complete the following activities  
noted in *Roadmap for the  
Journey-A Trainer's Guide*

5.5 Twelve minute video clip-  
*Just Being Kids-Janella's Story*

5.6 Models of Team Interaction

5.7 Case Study





## Defining and Embedding Practices Related to Natural Environment throughout the Early Intervention Process



## Defining Natural Environments

### Federal IDEA Part C Regulations

The following are the relevant sections related to natural environments from the IDEA Part C regulations at 34 CFR Part 303:

“To the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the child, early intervention services must be provided in natural environments, including the home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate.” 34 CFR 303.12(b)

New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. *Our Journey with Families: Service Delivery in Natural Environments in Rural Areas*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nmddpc.com/PDFs/OurJourney.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20]. Made possible by a grant from the New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.



Each state participating in IDEA, Part C must establish and implement “policies and procedures to ensure that-

(1)To the maximum extent appropriate, early intervention services are provided in natural environments; and

(2)The provision of early intervention services for any infant or toddler occurs in a setting other than a natural environment only if early intervention cannot be achieved satisfactorily for the infant or toddler in a natural environment.” 34 CFR 303.167(c)

New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. *Our Journey with Families: Service Delivery in Natural Environments in Rural Areas*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nmddpc.com/PDFs/OurJourney.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20]. Made possible by a grant from the New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.



“Natural environments means settings that are natural or normal for the child's age peers who have no disabilities.”

34 CFR 303.18

Each IFSP must include a statement of “the natural environments, as described in § 303.12(b), and § 303.18 in which early intervention services will be provided, and a justification of the extent, if any, to which the services will not be provided in a natural environment.” 34 CFR 303.344(d)(ii)

New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. *Our Journey with Families: Service Delivery in Natural Environments in Rural Areas*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nmddpc.com/PDFs/OurJourney.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20]. Made possible by a grant from the New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.





**Justification** for providing services in a setting outside of a natural environment includes sufficient documentation to support the IFSP team's decision that the child's outcome(s) could not be met in natural settings even with supplementary supports.

This justification includes how the services provided in a specialized setting will be generalized into the child's daily activities and routines. It also includes a plan with timelines and the supports necessary to return to early intervention within daily activities and routines.

New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. *Our Journey with Families: Service Delivery in Natural Environments in Rural Areas*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nmddpc.com/PDFs/OurJourney.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20]. Made possible by a grant from the New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.



Before continuing,  
please complete the  
following activities as  
noted in the *Roadmap  
for the Journey-A  
Trainer's Guide*:

5.9a Defining Natural  
Environments Quiz-  
More Rules for the Road

5.10 Outside Reading  
Assignment-Natural  
Environments



## Embedding Practices Related to Natural Environment throughout the Early Intervention Process

Regardless of differences in team approaches, five common themes have emerged from research findings that comprise recommended practices for quality supports and services in natural environments.





“Providing services in natural environments is not just the law, but more importantly, it reflects the core mission of early intervention, which is to support families to provide learning opportunities for their child within the activities, routines, and events of every day life.”

IDEA Infant and Toddlers Coordinators Association. (2001, April). *Position Paper on the Provision of Early Intervention Services in Accordance with Federal Requirements on Natural Environments*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.ideainfanttoddler.org/position.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20].

Embedding these practices into all phases of the family-centered early intervention process will ensure that children and families are supported in accordance with the intent of Part C of IDEA.



## Recommended Practice Number One:

All intervention discussions focus on supporting the child's participation in the **daily routines and activities** unique to that family;



New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. *Our Journey with Families: Service Delivery in Natural Environments in Rural Areas*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nmddpc.com/PDFs/OurJourney.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20]. Made possible by a grant from the New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.

IDEA Infant and Toddlers Coordinators Association. (2001, April). *Position Paper on the Provision of Early Intervention Services in Accordance with Federal Requirements on Natural Environments*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.ideainfanttoddler.org/position.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20].



- **Family Routines**

The usual events that are customarily a part of a family's schedule (ex. meal time, bath time, play time, car rides, nap time, etc.)

- **Everyday Activities**

Things a family does with their infant or toddler (ex. having fun at the playground, going for a walk, shopping, playing with friends in a playgroup, etc.)

*Early Intervention Supports and Services in Everyday Routines, Activities, and Places-An Overview.* [Online]. Available: <http://www.jfkpartners.org/Content/PDF/COBabiesBELONG.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 5].





Before continuing,  
please complete the  
following activities as  
noted in *Roadmap for  
the Journey-A  
Trainer's Guide*:

5.12 Meet Kim and  
Her Family

5.13 During the Initial  
Visit



## Recommended Practice Number Two:

Services are designed to **individually support or enhance each child's participation** in settings where the family lives, learns, and plays.



New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. *Our Journey with Families: Service Delivery in Natural Environments in Rural Areas*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nmddpc.com/PDFs/OurJourney.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20]. Made possible by a grant from the New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.

IDEA Infant and Toddlers Coordinators Association. (2001, April). *Position Paper on the Provision of Early Intervention Services in Accordance with Federal Requirements on Natural Environments*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.ideainfanttoddler.org/position.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20].



## Supports and services should...

- Include the siblings, care providers, other family members, and friends in the planning and delivery of supports and services
- Discover the child's talents and gifts and support them in the context of typical play and relationships

Recognize that each child brings their individual characteristics that families and providers must respect and respond to while supporting development and learning.

*Early Intervention Supports and Services in Everyday Routines, Activities, and Places-An Overview.* [Online]. Available: <http://www.jfkpartners.org/Content/PDF/COBabiesBELONG.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 5].



Before continuing, please complete the following activities as noted in *Roadmap for the Journey-A Trainer's Guide*:

*5.15 Floor Play Between Bobby and Kim and As Kim Gets Older*

*5.16 Video clip-Just Being Kids-Nolan's Story*



## **Recommended Practice Number Three:**

Services are provided within activities that occur in natural settings and offer children **opportunities to learn and practice new skills.**



New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. *Our Journey with Families: Service Delivery in Natural Environments in Rural Areas*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nmdpdc.com/PDFs/OurJourney.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20]. Made possible by a grant from the New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.

IDEA Infant and Toddlers Coordinators Association. (2001, April). *Position Paper on the Provision of Early Intervention Services in Accordance with Federal Requirements on Natural Environments*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.ideainfanttoddler.org/position.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20].





Learning occurs best when children learn and practice skills in the settings and within the routines in which they would typically use those same skills.

*Early Intervention Supports and Services in Everyday Routines, Activities, and Places -An Overview.* [Online]. Available: <http://www.jfkpartners.org/Content/PDF/COBabiesBELONG.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 5].





## **Recommended Practice Number Four:**

**Services foster the  
use and  
development of  
natural supports in  
each family's social  
and cultural network.**



New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. *Our Journey with Families: Service Delivery in Natural Environments in Rural Areas*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nmddpc.com/PDFs/OurJourney.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20]. Made possible by a grant from the New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.

IDEA Infant and Toddlers Coordinators Association. (2001, April). *Position Paper on the Provision of Early Intervention Services in Accordance with Federal Requirements on Natural Environments*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.ideainfanttoddler.org/position.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20].



Developmentally appropriate practice includes planning supports and services based on an understanding of the social and cultural contexts in which each individual child lives to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful, relevant, and respectful for that child and his or her family.

Supports and services must be offered in ways that make sense to the whole family's ways of living.

*Early Intervention Supports and Services in Everyday Routines, Activities, and Places-An Overview.* [Online]. Available: <http://www.jfkpartners.org/Content/PDF/COBabiesBELONG.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 5].



Before continuing, please  
complete the following  
activities as noted in  
*Roadmap for the Journey-A  
Trainer's Guide:*

*5.18 Early in the  
Intervention Relationship*



**Recommended  
Practice Number Five:**  
**Service providers  
primarily act as  
consultants to the key  
individuals in each  
child's life, using their  
knowledge and expertise  
to help others facilitate  
learning opportunities in  
natural settings.**



New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. *Our Journey with Families: Service Delivery in Natural Environments in Rural Areas*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.nmdpdc.com/PDFs/OurJourney.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20]. Made possible by a grant from the New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.

IDEA Infant and Toddlers Coordinators Association. (2001, April). *Position Paper on the Provision of Early Intervention Services in Accordance with Federal Requirements on Natural Environments*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.ideainfanttoddler.org/position.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 20].



Providers can help by blending therapy services into daily activities and routines instead of giving families “one more thing to do.”

Service settings are expanding and services for young children and their families are less fragmented.

Disciplines are working more closely together in the interests of the child’s overall development and the family’s priorities.

*Early Intervention Supports and Services in Everyday Routines, Activities, and Places -An Overview.* [Online]. Available: <http://www.jfkpartners.org/Content/PDF/COBabiesBELONG.pdf> [Retrieved: 2004, May 5].



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*5.20 Video clip-Just Being  
Kids-Evan's Story*





When families and educators work together in partnership, outstanding results can be achieved.

In the words of a Tennessee mom, “After everything I read, and everyone I talked to, I was inspired to believe that keeping Ethan with his typical peers was the best thing I could do to help him reach his potential. I don’t think segregation works for minorities or individuals with special needs. I feel really strongly, that Ethan has got to have an equal chance.”

Susan Goldblatt, mother of Ethan



To the children at the Susan Gray School, Sofia is just one of the kids. She has a fancy chair and can't always do some of the same things they do, but there is no fear or reluctance to play with her, because she hasn't been stigmatized by being separated from a group setting and treated as being "different."

When children are introduced to diversity at such an early age, it doesn't seem like "diversity" – it just seems normal.

Tamelyn Feinstein, mother of Sofia

